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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 001555

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP, EAP/PD, DRL,
DRL/AWH, DRL/IRF, S/P
NSC FOR J.BADER, D.WALTON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/16/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KISL](#) [KPAO](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: INTERFAITH DIALOGUE -- WORKING WITH INDONESIA
TOWARD NOVEMBER IN JAKARTA

REF: JAKARTA 1425 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Mission is working closely with the GOI to finalize details of the proposed bilateral interfaith dialogue with the U.S. Poloff met recently with GOI officials to discuss key elements of the dialogue, which is slated to take place in Jakarta in November. The GOI is being very flexible re the plans and is now welcoming regional participants. The Indonesians consider, as we do, the dialogue to be a key component of the developing U.S.-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership. The GOI appreciates the USG initiative to sponsor the event working via The Asia Foundation. END SUMMARY.

WORKING CLOSELY ON THE DIALOGUE

¶2. (C) Mission is working closely with the Indonesian government to finalize details of the proposed bilateral interfaith dialogue with the U.S. Poloff met recently with Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) officials to discuss:

-- A) the agenda of the dialogue;
-- B) the composition of the Indonesian and U.S. delegations;
-- C) the possibility of regional participants; and,
-- D) potential dates in November in Jakarta.

¶3. (C) We came to a mutual understanding with DEPLU officials on several guiding principles for the dialogue. It would have a working component that goes beyond just discussion panels; thus, allowing for future collaboration. The event would be facilitated by the Indonesian government and the USG, but not led by government officials. The participants should self-select into working groups to address clearly identified topics and allow for continued collaboration. Participants could include faith leaders, representatives from civil society organizations and government officials who work on related issues.

GOI FLEXIBLE

¶4. (C) The GOI is being flexible regarding the plans. Despite some initial reluctance, Indonesian officials informed us that they would welcome regional participation in the dialogue initiative. In fact, DEPLU officials noted that a May 2009 Austria-hosted bilateral interfaith dialogue also included significant regional participation and that it had been very successful in their estimation.

¶5. (SBU) GOI officials noted they would prefer equal numbers

of participants from both the United States and Indonesia and were pleased with the proposed size of the U.S. delegation (between 20-25 participants). We encouraged the GOI to increase the size of its delegation, if so desired.

Additionally, DEPLU officials informed us that they would play a key role in choosing the Indonesian delegation. They also suggested regional participants be chosen by a local NGO with input from both DEPLU and Mission. Mission understands that the Department, working with The Asia Foundation (TAF), will identify and vet potential members of the U.S. delegation.

¶6. (C) The GOI agreed to tentative dates of November 11-13 for the dialogue in the hopes that it coincides with the potential visit by President Obama to Jakarta. DEPLU officials have not yet committed to covering the costs of hotel accommodations and venue. Mission urged GOI officials to provide details of financial commitments quickly, noting that there are many preparations to be made in order to meet a November timeframe.

NEXT STEPS

¶7. (C) Indonesian officials were pleased that The Asia Foundation (TAF) was selected to provide organizational and logistical support for the interfaith dialogue. Indonesian officials also suggested that TAF should reach out to local Indonesian NGO's to cooperate in developing programming ideas for the event. Mission has flagged this point in discussions with The Asia Foundation.

¶8. (C) Mission will continue discussions with DEPLU and other Indonesian officials to finalize details of the

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interfaith dialogue. Umar Hadi, Director of Public Diplomacy at DEPLU, will meet with Director for EAP/PD Karl Stoltz and Indonesia Director for TAF Robin Bush later this week to further discuss remaining issues.

¶9. (C) The dialogue remains a very high priority for Indonesia and it wants to see it succeed. The GOI considers, as we do, interfaith discussions to be a key component of the developing U.S.-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership in the area of "people-to-people" ties.

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